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CARDIN, MIKULSKI ANNOUNCE \$1.8 MILLION GRANT TO HELP MARYLAND FIGHT "IMPAIRED" DRIVING

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators **Benjamin L. Cardin** and **Barbara A. Mikulski** (both D-MD) today announced that the State Highway Administration has been awarded a \$1,879,392 grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to help fight "impaired" driving. The SHA will distribute the funds statewide, which will be used for education and enforcement.

Impaired driving from alcohol and/or drug use has taken a deadly toll on Maryland's roads. While overall driving fatalities in Maryland have decreased from 591 in 2008 to 547 in 2009, impaired driving fatalities have increased from 145 in 2008 to 162 in 2009, representing a 12 percent increase.

"Maryland and other states around the nation struggle with the problem of impaired drivers on our roads," said **Senator Cardin**. "This funding will help us alert the driving public to the dangers of impaired driving and ensure that we have the resources we need to get impaired drivers off the roads."

"Every day, Marylanders use the state's roadways to get back and forth to jobs, schools, and home, and they expect these roadways to be safe for them and their families," **Senator Mikulski** said. "It's my job to fight for the resources Maryland needs to make sure our roads are safe from all hazards, including impaired drivers. I will continue to fight every year to make sure that Maryland's transportation needs are a priority in the federal checkbook."

Over the past five years, an average of 8,498 impaired driving crashes has occurred annually in Maryland, according to the State Highway Administration. On average, 208 people have lost their lives each year. This loss of life represents more than one-third of all Maryland traffic fatalities. In addition, an average of 4,783 people has been injured annually, accounting for 9 percent of all Maryland traffic injuries.

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